

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV PRIORITY

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AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS PRIORITY

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EXDIS

FOL REPEAT CAIRO 2121 ACTION SECSTATE DTD 4 FEB.

QUOTE

S E C R E T CAIRO 2121

FOR THE SECRETARY FROM AMBASSADOR

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: OVIP (SYG WALDHEIM), PFOR, XF

SUBJ: SYG WALDHEIM'S TALKS WITH EGYPTIANS

REF STATE 23131,

SUMMARY: IN TALKS WITH EGYPTIANS, WALDHEIM IMPRESSED WITH
IMPORTANCE GOE ATTACHES TO EARLY RECONVENING OF GENEVA.

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FAILING EARLY RECONVENING, GOE WILL TAKE MATTER TO UNSC.
SINCE PLO PARTICIPATION REMAINS MAJOR STUMBLING BLOCK, SEVERAL
IDEAS EXPLORED WITH FAHMY, INCLUDING:
(A) "PAN-ARAB DELEGATION" TO INCLUDE PLO; (B) SOVIET TWO
TIER PROPOSAL; (C) SYG'S OWN CONCEPT OF CEREMONIAL RECON-
ING OF GENEVA IN APRIL OR MAY AND BREAKING INTO REGIONAL
AND FUNCTIONAL WORKING GROUPS UNITIL AFTER ISRAELI ELECTIONS.

VARIANT OF LAST IS IDEA OF SYG SENDING INVITATION TO ALL PARTICIPANTS, INCLUDING PLO, IN HOPE THAT PLO IS MORE INTERESTED IN RECEIVING INVITATION THAN IN ACTUAL PARTICIPATION. FAHMY, WHO SAW PRACTICAL PROBLEMS IN FIRST THREE ALTERNATIVES, WAS ATTRACTED TO THIS VARIANT. IF SYG INVITATION SPECIFICALLY CITED RESOLUTIONS 242 AND 238 AS BASIS FOR RECONVENED CONFERENCE, FAHMY MOTED PLO WILL CERTAINLY NOT COME. AT SAME TIME IT WILL TAKE HEAT OFF GOE ON PLO PARTICIPATION. SYG ALSO MENTIONED OPTION THAT HE MIGHT RECONVENE GENEVA IN APRIL OR MAY, BILLING MEETING AS LAST PHASE OF THE ORIGINAL SESSION. MEETING COULD NAME GROUP OF NATIONAL REPS, OSTENSIBLY TO WORK OUT PROCEDURAL DETAILS FOR A SECOND PHASE CONFERENCE IN WHICH PLO WOULD PARTICIPATE. HE ACKNOWLEDGED THIS WOULD AT BEST BE "HOLDING OPERATION". SLIGHTLY DEFENSIVE ABOUT HIS CURRENT MISSION, WALDHEIM NOTED UNGA RESOLUTION 31/62 REQUIRES REPORT, AND EVEN ISRAELIS ARE AGREEABLE TO HIS TRIP. ON THEIR PART, EGYPTIANS HAD EMPHASIZED TO HIM STRONG GOE VIEW THAT SYG PLAY A PART AND THAT GENEVA BE UNDER UN UMBRELLA. WALDHEIM UNDERTOOK KEEP YOU INFORMED, IF POSSIBLE THROUGH OUR AMBASSADORS, BUT IN ANY CASE BY SENDING URQUHART TO WASHINGTON TO BRIEF YOU PRIOR TO YOUR DEPARTURE. RECALLING YOUR REQUEST THAT HE SHOULD NOT COMMIT HIMSELF, WALDHEIM ASSURED THAT HE WILL NOT DO SO. END SUMMARY

1. SYG WALDHEIM, WHO HAS BEEN HAVING EXPLORATORY TALKS WITH EGYPTIANS PAST TWO DAYS, ASKED ME TO COME BY TO SEE HIM YESTERDAY AFTERNOON AT HIS HOTEL SUITE. RECALLING HIS MEETING WITH YOU PRIOR TO DEPARTURE, WALDHEIM SAID HE
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HAD PROMISED TO KEEP YOU INFORMED OF HIS TALKS. UP TO YESTERDAY AFTERNOON, HE HAD MET TWICE WITH FAHMY AND SENIOR EGYPTIANS AND WAS SCHEDULED SEE PRES SADAT TODAY PRIOR TO EMPLANING FOR DAMASCUS. HE ASKED THAT I SEND YOU FOLLOWING RUND-DOWN OF WHAT HAD DEVELOPED UP TO THAT TIME.

2. WALDHEIM WAS MUCH IMPRESSED WITH IMPORTANCE GOE ATTACHES TO EARLY RECONVENING OF GENEVA. UNLESS THERE IS EARLY MEETING OF GENEVA, FAHMY HAD MADE IT CLEAR GOE WILL TAKE MATTER TO UNSC AND TRY TO GET APPROVAL FOR WORKING GROUP TO GO OUT TO THE AREA IN ORDER TO REVIVE PEACE PROCESS.

3. WALDHEIM NOTED WRLY THAT, WHILE EVERYONE TALKS ABOUT THE ATMOSPHERE NEVER BEING BETTER FOR PEACE, TRANSLATING THIS INTO TANGIBLE PROGRESS REMAINS A FORMIDABLE TASK, ESPECIALLY WHEN THE POSITIONS OF THE TWO SIDES ON FUNDAMENTAL ISSUES ARE STILL FAR APART. QUESTION OF PLO PARTICIPATION IN A RECONVENED GENEVA CONFERENCE HAD BEEN PRINCIPAL TOPIC OF DISCUSSION. HE HAD EXPLORED WITH FAHMY LATTER'S THINKING

ABOUT HOW THIS MIGHT BE HANDLED. NOTHING CONCLUSIVE HAD EMERGED, BUT FOLLOWING IDEAS HAD BEEN DISCUSSED:

(A) A "PAN-ARAB DELEGATION" TO INCLUDE PLO. WALDHEIM FOUND FAHMY TEPID ON THIS IDEA. VIEWING IT AS AN ISRAELI PLOY, FAHMY INSISTED ISRAEL SHOULD NOT TELL ARABS HOW TO ORGANIZE THEMSELVES ANY MORE SO THAN VICE VERSA. IT WAS BETTER TO HAVE SEPARATE ARAB DELEGATIONS. IF, HOWEVER, ISRAELIS INSIST ON PAN-ARAB DELEGATION, GOE WOULD GO ALONG BUT WOULD RESUFE TO HEAD IT. INSTEAD, GOE WOULD PROPOSE THAT ARAFAT HEAD JOINT DELEGATION. THIS WOULD SHOW UP THE FUTILITY OF SUCH AN IDEA.

(B) SOVIET TWO TIER PROPOSAL, INCLUDING INITIAL PREPARATORY MEETING. FAHMY HAD ALSO NOT FAVORED THIS IDEA. HE HAD INSISTED THAT GOE IS NOT INTERESTED IF PLO IS NOT REPRESENTED
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AT INITIAL PREPARATORY MEETING AS WELL AS AT SUBSEQUENT, SUBSTANTIVE SESSIONS. WALDHEIM WAS SKEPTICAL THAT SOVIET APPROACH OFFERS ANY PROMISE.

(C) SYG'S OWN CONCEPT OF RECONVENING GENEVA IN APRIL OR MAY IN ACCORDANCE UNGA RESOLUTION 31/62 FOR A CEREMONIAL MEETING AND THEREAFETER BREAKING UP INTO REGIONAL AND FUNCTIONAL WORKING GROUPS. APPROPRIATE GROUPS MIGHT INCLUDE PALESTINIAN REPS. THEY COULD CARRY ON UNTIL AFTER ISRAELI ELECTION IN MAY WHEN GENEVA MIGHT AGAIN BE RECONVENED FOR MORE ACTIVE SESSIONS. WHILE EGYPTIANS HAVE SOME SYMPATHY FOR THIS APPROACH, BOTH FAHMY AND WALDHEIM RECOGNIZED THAT USG AND ISRAELI NEGATIVE VOTES ON UNGA RESOLUTION MEAN TWO PRINCIPAL PARTICIPANTS WILL PROBABLY NOT WANT TO GO ALONG. HE HAD NOT YET SOUNDED OUT ISRAELI REACTION, BUT RATHER SUSPECTS IT WILL BE NEGATIVE. HE ALSO VOICED PERSONAL VIEW THAT ISRAELIS ARE IN FACT NOT READY FOR EARLY GENEVA CONFERENCE.

(D) ANOTHER PROCEDURAL VARIANT HAD COME TO HIM, WALDHEIM NOTED. PERHAPS SYG COULD SEND INVITATIONS TO ALL PARTIES, INCLUDING PLO, CITING OPERATIVE PARA 2 OF UNGA RESOLUTION 31/62 TO RECONVENE GENEVA IN LATE MARCH OR APRIL. BASED ON TALKS WITH PLO REP IN NEW YORK, WALDHEIM HAD GAINED IMPRESSION THAT PALESTINIANS ARE MORE INTERESTED IN RECEIVING INVITATION THAN THEY ARE IN ACTUAL PARTICIPATION. HE ADMITTED, HOWEVER, THAT PLO POL REP FARUQ KADDUMI, WHOM HE HAD MET IN GENEVA EN ROUTE TO CAIRO, HAD BEEN MORE AMBIVALENT ON PLO ATTENDANCE. KADDUMI HAD SIMPLY SAID PLO WOULD WISH TO STUDY SUCH AN INVITATION. FAHMY, ACCORDING TO WALDHEIM, WAS ATTRACTED TO THE IDEA. DURING A PRIVATE TETE-A-TETE, FAHMY HAD SUGGESTED THAT IF SYG INVITATION SPECIFICALLY CITES RES-

OLUTION 242 AND 238 AS BASIS FOR A RECONVENED GENEVA CONF, PLO WILL CERTAINLY NOT COME. THIS WOULD OVERCOME ISRAELI OBJECTION TO PLO PARTICIPATION. GOE AND OTHER ARAB COULD POINT OUT PLO INVITED BUT HAD OPTED NOT TO BE PRESENT. WALDHEIM PLANS TO TRY OUT CONCEPT ON ISRAELIS, BUT BELIEVES THEY WILL OBJECT AS MATTER SECRET

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OF PRINCIPLE TO ANY INVITATION TO PLO.

(E) WALDHEIM SAID HE WAS ALSO TURNING OVER IN HIS MIND IDEA OF SYG RECONVENING GENEVA IN TERMS OF A MEETING WHICH WOULD BE BILLED AS THE LAST PHASE OF THE ORIGINAL CONFERENCE. THEORETICALLY, GENEVA CONFERENCE IS STILL IN SESSION, HENCE CAN BE RECONVENED BY SYG WHO SENT OUT ORIGINAL INVITATIONS. ANY SUCH MEETING WOULD HAVE TO BE PURELY PRO FORMA WITH ONLY ORIGINAL PARTIES PARTICIPATING. WHILE IT WOULD NOT SOLVE PLO PARTICIPATION ISSUE, EGYPTIANS AND OTHER ARABS COULD POINT TO IT TO SHOW THAT ME PEACE PROCESS HAS RESUMED. ASKED HOW SUCH MEETING WOULD REALLY HELP PROBLEM, WALDHEIM RESPONDED IT MIGHT SET UP A PERMANENT GROUP OF NATIONAL REPS IN GENEVA, SIMILAR TO WHAT WE HAD FOR AWHILE AFTER DEC, 73, MEETING, OSTENSIBLY TO WORK OUT PROCEDURAL DETAILS FOR SECOND PHASE CONFERENCE IN WHICH PLO WOULD PARTICIPATE. HE AGREED THAT THIS WOULD AT BEST BE A "HOLDING OPERATION."

4. WALDHEIM WAS SLIGHTLY DEFENSIVE ABOUT HIS CURRENT MISSION. HENOTED UNGA RESOLUTION 31/62 REQUIRES REPORT ON APRIL 1, HENCE VISIT NECESSARY. EVEN ISRAELIS AGREED. HE EMPHASIZED STRONG EGYPTIAN WISH TO HAVE SYG PLAY A PART AND GENEVA TO BE UNDER UN UMBRELLA. FAHMY HAD TOLD HIM OF INITIAL SOVIET OBJECTION TO ANY UN INVOLVEMENT AND GOE INSISTENCE DURING FAHMY'S NOV 73 JOINT MEETING WITH SOVIET AMB VINOGRADOV AND ME THAT SYG HAVE A ROLE. I CONFIRMED DETAILS OF THAT MEETING.

5. COMMENT: WALDHEIM'S IMPRESSION ON THE IMPORTANCE FAHMY ATTACHES TO EARLY RECONVENING OF GENEVA IS CONSISTENT WITH EGYPTIAN COMMENTS TO US. FAHMY WAS CLEARLY MORE CANDID WITH SYG THAN HE HAS BEEN WITH US ON VARIOUS POSSIBLE FORMULAE, BUT THEN WE HAVE DELIBERATELY AVOIDED ENGAGING HIM ON THIS ISSUE. IT IS TRUE EGYPTIANS WANT SYG AND UN INVOLVEMENT IN CONFERENCE. WALDHEIM WILL TRANSIT CAIRO AGAIN FEB 11-12 AT THE END OF HIS ME TRIP. HE WILL TRY TO SEND YOU REPORTS SECRET

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THROUGH OUR AMBASSADORS, BUT WILL IN ANY CASE SEND ASST SGY

URQUHART TO WASHINGTON TO BRIEF YOU PRIOR TO YOUR DEPARTURE.
HE MENTIONED SEVERAL TIMES THAT YOU HAD ASKED HIM NOT TO
COMMIT HIMSELF AND THAT HE WILL NOT DO SO. HE SEEMS TO BE
STICKING PURELY TO PROCEDURAL ASPECTS.
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